DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 296 661 HE 021 531

AUTHOR McLean, James E.
TITLE A Useful University Departmental Evaluation System.
PUB DATE Oct 87
NOTE 21p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Evaluation Association, (Boston, MA, October 15-17, 1987).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Instruction; Departments; *Evaluation Criteria; Evaluation Methods; *Faculty Evaluation; Higher Education; *Merit Rating; Public Service; Rating Scales; *Research Skills; School Community Relationship; *Teacher Participation

ABSTRACT

A university departmental merit evaluation plan and lessons learned from implementing the plan are discussed. The faculty evaluation plan was based on four principles: broad-based faculty and administrative support; informing faculty of expectations of them before the evaluation; providing a description of the primary decision-making and data-gathering roles played by students, faculty, and administration; and providing feedback and resources to assist faculty to enhance their performance and achieve their career goals. The evaluation plan includes independent ratings of faculty in four areas: teaching, research, service (external to the university), and academic citizenship (internal university service). Each of these areas has specific criteria for three possible ratings: basic merit, superior merit, and exceptional merit. Each faculty member participates in weighing the categories each year. After the third year of use of the plan, there have been modifications in the rating scales, but the basic system remains unchanged. The specific rating scales for each category is appended, along with the reporting form used by faculty. (Author/SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED296661

A USEFUL UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTAL EVALUATION SYSTEM

James E. McLean
Evaluation and Assessment Laboratory
The University of Alabama

P.O. Box Q
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-9782

Paper presented at Evaluation '87
the Annual Meeting of the
American Evaluation Association

October 15-17, 1987

Boston, Massachusetts

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

James E. McLean

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

HE 021 531

ABSTRACT

A Useful University Departmental Evaluation System

James E. McLean
Evaluation and Assessment Laboratory
The University of Alabama
P. O. Box Q
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-9782

The purpose of this paper is to present a university departmental merit evaluation plan, the principles upon which it is based, and the lessons learned by its implementation. The faculty evaluation plan was based on four principles-- a sound faculty evaluation plan should enjoy broad-based faculty and administrative support; prior to evaluation, faculty must know what is expected of them; the plan must include a description of the primary decision making and data gathering roles played by students, faculty, administration, and any others participating in the process; and feedback and resources must be provided to assist faculty to enhance their performance and achieve their career goals.

The evaluation plan provides for independent ratings of faculty in four broad areas--teaching, research, service (external to the university), and academic citizenship (internal university service). Each of these areas has specific criteria for three possible ratings--basic merit, superior merit, and exceptional merit. Each faculty member participates in weighting the categories each year.

The basic system is in its third year of implementation. While modifications in the rating scales have occurred, the basic system remains unchanged and accepted generally. The paper includes the specific rating scales for each category as well as the reporting form used by the faculty.

A Useful University Departmental Evaluation System

One's performance on many jobs can be evaluated directly by the outcomes of his or her labors. For example, firemen can be evaluated by how many fires they put out, businessmen by their profits, and baseball players by their batting averages (Stone, 1978). Evaluating professors is not so straight forward as outcome measures are much more elusive. While many universities have mandated evaluations of faculty, often tied to pay increases, their criteria tend to be only broad areas of accomplishment such as teaching, research, and service. The purpose of this paper is to describe a university departmental merit evaluation plan and the principles upon which it is based and to discuss its implementation.

Background

Historically, faculty members at all levels have been suspicious of plans for evaluating their performance. Most feel that evaluation provides a vehicle administrators can use to reward their supporters at the expense of their critics. In certain cases, this is well justified as many college faculty members feel there is little objective evidence upon which the professional performance of college faculty can be judged. Many excellent articles and books provide concrete suggestions regarding criteria and evaluation systems (e.g., Braskamp, Brandenburg, & Ory, 1984; Seldin, 1984; & Stone, 1978).

A faculty evaluation system was developed for the Area of Behavioral Studies at the University of Alabama utilizing the research literature in an attempt to minimize the problems. The University Board of Trustees mandates that all salary increases be based on merit or how each faculty member contributes to the mission of the University (i.e., teaching, research, and

service). Common sense and the research literature suggested the following four principles:

1. An evaluation plan should have the support of the faculty and the administration. In order to achieve this support, the plan must be openly and democratically conceived and the faculty should have significant input in the plan. Further, the faculty must be rewarded based on their accomplishments under the plan and not on their relationship to the person evaluating the evidence.

2. Prior to evaluation, faculty must know what the criteria for evaluation are. The plan, including any criteria for judgments, should be available to faculty in time that they may adjust their priorities if they desire. This is not only common sense but an element of due process under law.

3. The evaluation plan must provide for flexibility in faculty assignments. This principle is necessary because if faculty are rewarded only for certain specific activities (e.g., research) or disproportionately to their assignments, many other necessary functions of a university may be neglected (e.g., teaching and advising).

4. Resources must be provided to assist faculty in enhancing their performance and achieve their career goals. It is not only unrealistic but ethically questionable to require faculty to perform functions for a positive evaluation, but not to support these activities. Support of the activities required for positive evaluations should be built into the system.

These four principles formed the basis of the departmental evaluation system described in the next section. As previously noted, there are numerous excellent sources for evaluating college faculty (e.g., Braskamp et al., 1984;

Seldin, 1984, & Stone 1978). Most of these cover only one aspect of a faculty member's duties or do not suggest how to combine the evaluation over the criteria.

The Evaluation Plan

The complete faculty evaluation policy can be found in Appendix A. Some of the highlights of the policy are described in this section along with how it conforms to the four principles presented in the previous section.

The present policy was developed over two years based on a dialogue between the unit administrator and the faculty. After an initial version was developed and approved by the faculty, it was used for two years. At that time, a faculty committee examined the policy and its functioning over two years and made a number of recommendations to the faculty. A discussion ensued among the total faculty where areas of strengths and weaknesses of the policy were noted. It was recommended that the unit administrator propose a revision of the policy based on results from the faculty discussion. Revisions were made, considered by the faculty, and adopted. The dean also approved and supported the policy based on the two years of results it produced. Thus, the evaluation policy obtained the support of a majority of the faculty and the dean.

The policy includes rating scales of faculty performance in four general areas--teaching, research, service, and academic citizenship. For the purposes of this policy service was defined as service beyond the university community and academic citizenship defined as service activities within the university community. While it is intended that the weighting of each component of the evaluation be approximately proportional to the faculty members assigned time and effort, faculty are able to negotiate the weightings

as long as academic citizenship comprises at least 10% of their total time. This allows for flexibility in faculty assignments while insuring that service functions such as committee assignments are recognized.

As previously noted, teaching, research, service, and academic citizenship comprise the four components of the evaluation policy. Each of these components relates to the university's mission and is also related to knowledge. Teaching, research, service, and academic citizenship relate to knowledge in different ways. A more complete description of each component and possible criteria for their evaluation follows.

Teaching

Teaching is a means of sharing knowledge with others. Research on teaching consistently has shown that there is a positive relationship between good teaching and an instructor's: (a) knowledge of the subject, (b) ability to motivate students, (c) ability to manage the teaching/learning process, and (d) interest in the subject and in teaching (Braskamp et al., 1984). These aspects of teaching can be assessed using various methods. For example, while the best source of information about a faculty member's ability to motivate students well may be the students themselves, students definitely are not the best qualified to assess a faculty member's knowledge of the subject. Some aspects of teaching may be evaluated using the products of instruction (e.g., course syllabi, tests, reference lists, etc.).

Research

Research may be thought of as the creation or expansion of knowledge. The real value of a faculty member's research is in its impact or potential impact. In order for research to have an impact, it first must be disseminated. Thus, publication is but a product or outcome of research. The

preferred form of dissemination may be changing. As technology advances, publication as we know it will likely be redefined as a form of dissemination. For example, the use of microfiche rather than the printed page is already making inroads in education (e.g., ERIC Resources in Education), and soon the on-line availability of research through computer data bases may be a preferred form.

Service

Faculty service provides a means of sharing knowledge through its application for the solution of the problems. This can be done at the state, regional, national, or international levels. The service of faculty can be assessed not only by "counting" instances of service but also by assessing the quality and the impact of that service.

Academic Citizenship

A university needs the involvement of faculty to operate efficiently. Thus, academic citizenship is using one's knowledge for university functions other than teaching. It may include among other things committee work, recruitment, and administration.

Each component is rated on a 3-point descriptive scale--basic merit, superior merit, and exceptional merit. This scale assumes that each faculty member will met or exceed the basic obligations of his/her position. Situations where this does not happen may be dealt with using other university policies including sanctions. The "basic merit" rating in an area indicates that a faculty member has met the basic expectations of a faculty member taking into consideration the time allocated for that function. A "superior merit" rating indicates the faculty member's performance has significantly exceeded the basic expectations. An "exceptional merit" rating is reserved

for those rare instances when evidence indicates a faculty member's performance far exceeds the general expectations based on the time allocated and the quality of performance. For each of the four components, the three rating points are described but room is left for professional judgment of the unit administrator. For example, one publication that is considered a classic in the field may earn an "exceptional" rating whereas for someone else, four good solid refereed publications may result only in a "superior" rating. Stone (1978) presented a list of evidence that might be used in evaluating faculty. This list with a number of additions is presented in Appendix B.

Implementation of the policy begins with each faculty member completing a "Proposed Activities Report" (Appendix C) and meeting independently with the unit administrator to negotiate the next year's assignments and the weightings of the components. At the end of the year, an "Annual Activities Report" (Appendix D) is submitted providing the evidence of performance for the year's activities. After receiving a rating, each faculty member again meets with the unit administrator to discuss the rating and how it might be improved in the future. A faculty member may also appeal a rating if he/she believes evidence was not considered or incorrectly interpreted.

The overall salary merit increase is determined using a composite of the merit ratings for the four components. First, all "basic merit" ratings are assigned a "1," "superior merit" ratings are assigned a "2,", and "exceptional merit" ratings are assigned a "3." The composite is computed by a weighted average of the four ratings (weighted by the negotiated weightings of the four components).

The actual merit increase is determined using a two-step process. First, the value of an individual merit unit is determined by dividing the total

amount of merit increase funds available by the sum of all the composite merit ratings. Second, an individual faculty member's merit salary increase is determined by multiplying his/her composite merit rating by the value of a single merit unit.

Discussion

In order for any merit evaluation plan to work, faculty must be rewarded based on what they accomplish and not on who they know or how pleasant (or unpleasant) they are. Any merit plan is doomed to failure when a majority of the faculty believe it is unfair or being abused.

If a sincere effort is not made to provide faculty with the resources to perform well in a merit plan, it will quickly lose support. Examples of such support are funds for professional travel, publication page costs, released time for merit activities, equipment/supplies for research, and technical support.

References

Braskamp, L. A., Brandenburg, D. C., & Ory, J. C. (1984). Evaluating teaching effectiveness: A practical guide. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Seldin, P. (1984). Changing practices in faculty evaluation. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Stone, J. E. (1978). Using objective evidence in the evaluation of professors. CEDR Quarterly, 11(4), 19-21.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

AREA MERIT EVALUATION POLICY
(August, 1987)
Area of Behavioral Studies
College of Education
University of ALabama

The faculty merit evaluation policy outlined in this paper is for the purpose of merit pay only. Tenure and promotion decisions are made based on College policy and University policy outlined in the Faculty Handbook. This faculty merit evaluation is based on Chapter XXXI, "Policy and Guidelines on Faculty Evaluation," in the Faculty Handbook; Report to the Area of the Behavioral Studies Committee on Faculty Evaluation (1985); the Faculty Evaluation position paper by J. E. McLean (1985); Report of the Faculty Merit Pay Committee (1987); and discussions with faculty.

The Area of Behavioral Studies merit evaluation process is intended to be a positive process that guarantees all faculty will receive a reasonable proportion of any merit money available while at the same time rewarding those who demonstrate superior or exceptional performance beyond that normally expected. This process does not deal with faculty who do not attain the basic level of performance expected of all faculty. Such problems are resolved through procedures outlined in the Faculty Handbook.

The faculty merit evaluation shall be conducted annually beginning with each faculty member's submission of a Proposed Activities Report for the upcoming year. This document (see Appendix A) will be submitted each April and will include the faculty member's plans for teaching, research, service, and academic citizenship. (Academic citizenship as presented in the Faculty Handbook and operationally defined in this document may constitute no less than 10% of the total merit rating.) The submission of the Proposed Activities Report will be followed by a meeting with the Area Head to negotiate a) duties for the following year as well as b) a weighting for each component of the merit proposal. (Note: The Proposed Activities Report will include teaching, research, service, and academic citizenship components operationally defined later in this document. The default weighting of these components will be proportional to the actual time assigned to each task less 10% for academic citizenship.) Each faculty member may renegotiate the weightings of the components one time after the original allocation. However, this must be done before December 31 of each year. In order to renegotiate the weightings, a faculty member should send a written request to the Area Head.

During April, the faculty member shall submit his/her Annual Activities Report (using the outline in Appendix B) to the Area Head. The Area Head will rate each component on a 3-point descriptive scale, and will then meet privately with each faculty member to discuss the ratings (and the upcoming year's Proposed Activities Report). Each 3-point descriptive scale consists of a "Basic Merit Rating" indicating that the faculty member has performed the basic expectations of a faculty member based on time allocated to a merit component, a "Superior Merit Rating" indicating that the faculty member's

performance has significantly exceeded the basic expectations based on the time allocated to a merit component, and an "Exceptional Merit Rating" reserved for those rare instances when evidence indicates a faculty member's performance far exceeds the expectations based on the time allocated to a merit component. At the faculty member's request, the Area Head will provide a written statement comparing that faculty member's performance to the criteria and will make recommendations for improvement prior to the next evaluation.

The overall merit rating will be a composite (weighted average) of the ratings on the four components of the merit proposal with a "1" assigned for "Basic Merit," a "2" assigned for "Superior Merit," and a "3" assigned for "Exceptional Merit." The weights used will be those agreed upon at the previous year's meeting or those renegotiated at the appropriate time. Merit pay for each faculty member will be determined using a two-step process. First, the value of an individual merit unit will be determined by dividing the total amount of merit funds allocated to the Area by the sum of all faculty members' composite merit ratings. Second, each individual faculty member's merit salary increase is computed by multiplying the value of a merit unit by the faculty member's composite merit rating.

The merit rating scales for each component are as follows:

Rating Scale--Teaching

Basic Merit

The instructor fulfills duties in teaching as expected. He/she observes appropriate University, College, Area, and Program policies relating to teaching; conducts classes competently; gives evidence that supports he/she is available to students; maintains currency in the discipline; and cooperates in appropriate Program, Area, College or University-wide teaching endeavors.

Superior Merit

The instructor excels in the process of teaching (e.g., course organization, teaching behaviors, student learning activities, and classroom atmosphere) and evidence indicates his/her students benefit or learn significantly from the course. He/she is recognized by both students and colleagues as an excellent teacher.

Exceptional Merit

The instructor is widely recognized by students and faculty as "the very best." He/she demonstrates a highly imaginative approach to teaching and is in near total command of his/her discipline.

Rating Scale--Research

Basic Merit

The faculty member engages in research commensurate with time assigned for such activities.

Superior Merit

The faculty member's engagement in research exceeds that expected for the time assigned to research and produces observable outcomes such as published results in refereed professional journals.

Exceptional Merit

The faculty member engages in research and produces research products beyond that expected for the time assigned to research. In Addition, evidence indicates that his/her research is having a major impact on the field.

Rating Scale--Service

Basic Merit

The faculty member engages in service activities commensurate with time assigned for such activities.

Superior Merit

The faculty member's engagement in service activities exceeds that expected for the time released. Further, service involvement goes beyond the local and state levels and includes leadership* roles.

Exceptional Merit

The faculty member engages in service activities, including service at the national level, far beyond the time released. The service also includes at least one major leadership* role.

*"Leadership" need not be restricted to "chairmanship." Leadership represents demonstrated effective participation and a willingness to contribute, offer constructive criticism, and make appropriate suggestions.

Rating Scale--Academic Citizenship

Basic Merit

The faculty member is available and advises students adequately*; serves effectively on student committees*; serves on Program, Area, College, and University committees*; attends faculty and committee meetings regularly; and responds to appropriate requests from colleagues, Program Chairs, the Area Head, and the Dean.

Superior Merit

The faculty member meets all of the criteria for Basic Merit and is recognized for providing leadership**. Further, the faculty member devotes a significant amount of time beyond that normally expected or released for such activities.

Exceptional Merit

The faculty member is helpful to additional advisees because other faculty members may not be available; serves effectively and contributes through appropriate suggestions and reviews to numerous student committees*; serves in a leadership** capacity on several Program, Area, College, and University committees*; routinely attends faculty and committee meetings and demonstrates leadership**; and responds promptly to appropriate requests from colleagues, Program Chairs, the Area Head, and the Dean. The faculty member is recognized by colleagues and administrators as one who goes the extra mile to promote the internal welfare of the University.

*When given a reasonable opportunity.

**"Leadership" need not be restricted to "chairmanship." Leadership represents effective participation and a willingness to contribute, offer constructive criticism, and make appropriate suggestions.

APPENDIX B

AREA OF BEHAVIORAL STUDIES
EXAMPLES OF SUPPORTING EVIDENCE FOR FACULTY MERIT REVIEWS*

The examples listed below are neither exhaustive nor mandatory. Not all examples are appropriate for every faculty member This list is intended merely to provide faculty members with ideas of evidence one might collect to support one's accomplishments. They are organized under the categories of teaching, research, service, and academic citizenship.

I. Teaching
   A. Class preparation.
      1. Samples of class handouts and other instructional materials distributed to students.
      2. Course syllabi, textbook outlines, and/or lists of course objectives.
      3. Copies of lecture notes, transparencies, maps, charts, models or other instructional aids.
   B. Class presentations, lectures, or demonstrations.
      1. Report of student evaluations of instruction.
      2. Colleague evaluations of live class presentation or video taped presentations.
      3. Student notes recorded from class lectures.
   C. Examinations, student evaluations and grading practices.
      1. Written or oral statement of test up-dating and review procedures.
      2. Professor's written or oral statement of grading procedures.
      3. Report of student evaluation of grading procedures from student evaluations of instruction in I.B.1 above.
   D. Instructional assistance and counseling for students enrolled in classes.
      1. Copy of posted office hours.
      2. Samples of written study guides and other aids for academically troubled students.
      3. Description of remedial programs for academically troubled students.
   E. Supervision and evaluation of class assignments.
      1. Written or oral statement of procedures for periodic review and evaluation of class assignments.
      2. Written or oral statement describing procedures for recording and periodic review of overall student progress.
   F. Undergraduate and graduate supervision (including practicums and internships).
      1. Number of thesis and dissertation committee chairmanships and memberships.
      2. Written estimates or record of time spent in graduate and undergraduate supervision.
      3. Written estimates of time spent identifying and developing internship, practicum, and fieldwork sites.
   G. Professional development.
      1. List of licensures and certifications.
      2. Records of workshop, conference, and convention attendance.

H. General.
   1. Recognized by (an) award(s) from outside the Area.
   2. Unsolicited feedback from current students or graduates.

II. Research
   A. Papers presented to professional, academic, or scientific societies.
      1. Evidence of principal, second, or third authorships.
      2. List of meetings where papers were presented.
      3. List of student papers prepared under candidate's supervision.
   B. Papers, monographs, and books published.
      1. Evidence of principal, second, or third authorship.
      2. Names of periodicals or collections in which the candidate has published.
   C. List of papers or manuscripts submitted or in preparation.
   D. List of research awards or prizes.
   E. Record of grants or other proposals funded.
   F. Record of grant proposals submitted or in process.
   G. Summary statement of research program(s).
      1. Statement of findings and conclusions of previous research efforts.
      2. Brief description of current investigation(s).
      3. Statement of anticipated future research directions.
   H. Impact of research.
      1. Listings in citation indexes.
      2. Requests for reprints, papers, etc.
      3. Requests as invited speaker at professional meetings.

III. Service
   A. List of membership and leadership roles in professional organizations.
   B. List of instances of service to schools, school systems, state departments of education, governmental agencies, and professional organizations.

IV. Academic Citizenship
   A. Record of advisees.
   B. Records of letters regarding the academic success and post-graduate placements of advisees.
   C. Demonstrated knowledge of institutional curricula, policy, and procedures.
   D. List of memberships and chairmanships of institutional committees
   E. Record of attendance at departmental, college, university and committee meetings.
   F. Record of attendance at commencement ceremonies.
   G. Statement by colleagues on the quality of work in committee meetings.
   H. List of reports, programs and other products and services rendered by committees on which the candidate has served.
   I. Evidence of leadership in Program, Area, College, and University.
   J. Statement regarding participation and leadership in other campus activities.

*List adapted from Stone, J. E. (1978). Using objective evidence in the evaluation of professors. CEDR Quarterly, 11, 4, 19-21.

APPENDIX C

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES REPORT FOR
ANNUAL MERIT REVIEW
AREA OF BEHAVIORAL STUDIES

NAME _____ YEAR _____

1. Assigned load:

	Course or Activity	Indicate anticipated FTE amount or overload
	_____	_____
Summer	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Fall	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Spring	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

2. Please indicate any special duties or responsibilities you believe may impact on the weighting of your activities for the coming academic year.

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX D

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT
AREA OF BEHAVIORAL STUDIES

Year:_____
Name:_____

I. Teaching (including dissertations, internships, etc.)

A. Part of Load

B. Overload (Unpaid)

C. Overload (Paid)

D. Faculty Development Activities

E. Other Teaching Activities

II. Research

A. Scholarly Publications (including journal articles, books, monographs, performances, reports, showings, and other scholarly activities)

1. National or International Distribution

2. Regional Distribution

3. State Distribution

4. Local Distribution

B. Scholarly Presentations

1. National or International Conferences

2. Regional Conferences

3. State Conferences

C. Research Grants (Applied for and/or Funded)

1. External

2. Internal

D. Research Recognition

1. Citations by Others

2. Requests for Reprints/Articles

E. Other Research Activities

III. Service

A. National (Committees, Task Forces, Professional Services, Advisory Groups, etc.)

B. Regional (Committees, Task Forces, Professional Services, Advisory Groups, etc.)

C. State (Committees, Task Forces, Professional Services, Advisory Groups, etc.)

D. Community (Committees, Task Forces, Professional Services, Advisory Groups, etc.)

E. Service/Training Contracts/Grants

F. Other Service (Unpaid)

G. Other Service (Paid)

IV. Academic Citizenship

A. Committees

1. University of Alabama

2. College of Education

3. Area/Program

4. Student

B. College/University Assignments

C. Area/Program Assignments

D. Other Academic Citizenship

V. Supporting Evidence (attach as desired/required)